

-----  
ACTION: NOAA-01

INFO: NMFS-01 534-01 6110-01 6130-01 3150-01 4000-01 4230-01  
4231-01 105-01 1000-01 REV-01 5131-01 6020-01 4431-01 500-01  
5130-01 750-01 750H-01 4410-01 6000-01 4234-01 6120-01  
4233-01 6132-01 6710-01 6730-01 6904-01 4420-01 4232-01  
CHIN-01 4210-01 NTIS-01 RFM-01  
----- AMADS AMADS 348/0941Z (TOTAL COPIES: 34)

RR RUCPDOC  
DE RUEHKO #9973/01 3480552  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 140552Z DEC 98  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7287  
RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9301  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 6210  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 6662  
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0305  
RUEHVK/AMCONSUL VLADIVOSTOK 0052  
RULSJGA/COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-OPL/G-CI//  
RUWMDMA/CCGDSEVENTEEN JUNEAU AK//OLE//  
RUWGTG/COMPACAREA COGARD ALAMEDA CA//POC/POF//  
BT  
UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 009973

STATE FOR OES/OMC, EAP/J  
USDOC FOR NOAA/NMFS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, PHSA, PREL, SENV, TPHY, JA, CM, RS, KS, PL  
SUBJECT: THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE - DONUT HOLE CONVENTION

1. SUMMARY: REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE UNITED STATES (OES/OMC, U.S. COAST GUARD, NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE, THE EMBASSY, AND PRIVATE SECTOR ADVISORS) AND FROM THE FIVE OTHER PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION FOR THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF POLLOCK RESOURCES IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA MET IN TOKYO NOVEMBER 30 THROUGH DECEMBER 4, 1998 FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES AND CONTINUED THEIR COOPERATIVE EFFORTS TO CONSERVE AND MANAGE POLLOCK STOCKS IN THE CONVENTION AREA.

2. THE UNITED STATES ACHIEVED ITS PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES AT THIS YEAR'S MEETING. THESE INCLUDE:  
--ESTABLISHING AN ALLOWABLE HARVEST LEVEL OF ZERO FOR THE CENTRAL BERING SEA POLLOCK FISHERY (CONTINUING THE

SIX-YEAR MORATORIUM IN THE FISHERY, ALLOWING STOCKS TO REBUILD);  
--MAINTAINING CONTINUITY OF BOGOSLOF ISLAND INDEX AREA  
SPAWNING DATA COLLECTION BY REPLACING THE U.S. R/V  
MILLER FREEMAN RESEARCH CRUISE WITH A SIMILAR CRUISE IN  
THE AREA BY THE JAPANESE R/V KAIYO MARU;  
--CONTINUING PROVISIONS ALLOWING BOARDING AND  
INSPECTIONS OF VESSELS ENGAGED IN TRIAL FISHING IN THE  
CENTRAL BERING SEA;  
--AGREEING THAT AN "INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL QUOTA" (INQ)  
APPROACH, RATHER THAN AN "OLYMPIC STYLE" FISHERY WAS THE  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR FISHING OPERATIONS IN THE  
CENTRAL BERING SEA, ONCE THE FISHERY IS REOPENED;  
--CONTINUING THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE FISHERY  
MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR THE CONDUCT OF COMMERCIAL  
FISHING OPERATIONS IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA, SHOULD  
STOCK CONDITIONS IMPROVE;  
--CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS OF TRANSPARENCY MEASURES  
CONSISTENT WITH THE UN AGREEMENT ON STRADDLING FISH  
STOCKS AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS;  
--TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THIS MULTILATERAL FORUM TO PRESS  
FOR SATISFACTORY DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS, AS WELL  
AS ADEQUATE FISHERY ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS, FOR FLEETS  
FISHING IN COASTAL STATE WATERS ADJACENT TO THE  
CONVENTION AREA; AND  
--REACHING AGREEMENT BY THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION TO  
A SPECIFIC SCHEDULE OF WORK WITHOUT INTERSESSIONAL  
MEETINGS FOR THE NEXT YEAR.

3. THE SIX COUNTRIES WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION -  
- THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, JAPAN, THE REPUBLIC OF  
KOREA, THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA -- AGREED ON  
CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES AND REVIEWED  
SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF POLLOCK STOCKS.  
END SUMMARY.

4. ESTABLISHING ALLOWABLE HARVEST LEVEL. BASED ON THE  
REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE, THE  
PARTIES AGREED THAT DATA WERE INSUFFICIENT TO DETERMINE  
THE BIOMASS OF THE ALEUTIAN BASIN POLLOCK STOCKS. THE  
PARTIES AGREED THAT, DESPITE A MORATORIUM ON COMMERCIAL  
FISHING IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA FOR THE PAST SIX  
YEARS, THE POLLOCK STOCKS ARE NOT REBUILT. AN UNUSUALLY  
STRONG EFFORT BY JAPAN, KOREA, AND POLAND, JOINED BY  
CHINA, TO ESTABLISH A "TOKEN" ALLOWABLE HARVEST LEVEL  
(AHL), TO BE ALLOCATED IN EQUAL AMOUNTS TO EACH OF THE  
PARTIES, FAILED. THE PURPOSES OF THIS INITIATIVE WERE  
TO SIGNAL THE FISHERMEN WHO HAD ENDURED SIX YEARS OF

POLLOCK FISHING MORATORIA IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA THAT A RETURN TO COMMERCIAL FISHING THERE WAS POSSIBLE, AND TO CONVINCE FISHERMEN WHO DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE SCIENCE REPORTS THAT THERE REALLY WERE NO POLLOCK IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA. THE UNITED STATES REMINDED PARTIES OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER ARTICLE 6 OF THE UNITED NATIONS AGREEMENT ON STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AND HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS TO INVOKE THE PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH WHEN SCIENTIFIC DATA DOES NOT CLEARLY INDICATE THAT IT IS PRUDENT TO ESTABLISH A FISHERY. AFTER THOROUGH DISCUSSION BY THE PARTIES, THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE COULD NOT REACH CONSENSUS TO ESTABLISH AN ALLOWABLE HARVEST LEVEL FOR THE COMMERCIAL FISHERY FOR POLLOCK IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA DURING 1999 UNDER THE MECHANISM SUGGESTED BY THE ABOVE PARTIES. THEREFORE, FOLLOWING THE PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE CONVENTION, THE AHL FOR 1999 WILL REMAIN AT ZERO. THE PARTIES AGREED TO RECONSIDER THE DETAILED KOREAN PROPOSAL FOR A MECHANISM TO ESTABLISH THIS TOKEN AHL AT THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING.

5. TRIAL FISHING. TRIAL FISHING BY VESSELS OF THE PARTIES WILL, HOWEVER, BE PERMITTED IN 1999, UNDER THE SAME TERMS AND CONDITIONS THAT WERE ESTABLISHED BY THE SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN 1997.

6. OBSERVER ISSUES. THE PARTIES ALSO CONTINUED THEIR DISCUSSIONS OF A CENTRAL BERING SEA OBSERVER PROGRAM. MOST PARTIES AGREED THAT THE CONVENTION PROVIDES THAT ONLY ONE NON-FLAG STATE OBSERVER PER VESSEL MUST BE ACCEPTED BY THE FLAG STATE OF A PARTY. SEVERAL PARTIES ALSO RAISED THE ISSUE OF EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL PARTIES TO PLACE OBSERVERS ABOARD OTHER PARTY VESSELS, SO AS TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONVENTION. THE PARTIES AGREED THAT THESE WERE COMPLEX ISSUES THAT COULD NOT BE RESOLVED AT THIS ANNUAL MEETING. IN ANY EVENT, ALL FISHING VESSELS WILL CARRY OBSERVERS WHEN COMMERCIAL FISHING IS RESUMED IN THE CONVENTION AREA.

7. MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR A CENTRAL BERING SEA FISHERY. DISCUSSION OF OTHER MANAGEMENT MEASURES THAT WILL APPLY ONCE A CENTRAL BERING SEA FISHERY IS RESUMED CONTINUED. THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS WERE REACHED:

--METHODS TO DETERMINE CATCH WEIGHT: THE CONSENSUS WAS THAT THE MOST ACCURATE AND EFFICIENT METHOD(S) SHOULD BE USED TO ESTIMATE CATCH. UNTIL THIS ISSUE IS RESOLVED, EITHER SCALES OR VOLUMETRIC METHODS (I.E. CALIBRATED BINS OR CODEND MEASUREMENT) SHOULD BE USED.

--METHOD OF CONDUCTING THE FISHERY: AS NOTED ABOVE, THE PARTIES REACHED CONSENSUS THAT AN INQ FISHERY WOULD BE THE MOST EQUITABLE METHOD BY WHICH TO CONDUCT A COMMERCIAL FISHERY IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA.

--ALLOCATION OF INQ: THE PARTIES AGREED THAT THIS ISSUE REQUIRES FURTHER DISCUSSION.

--SOURCE OF DATA FOR MANAGEMENT: THE GROUP CONCLUDED THAT THE RECORDS OF THE VESSEL MASTER SHOULD BE THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF DATA FOR FISHERY MANAGEMENT. HOWEVER, IF DISCREPANCIES ARE FOUND BETWEEN THE DATA FROM THE OBSERVER AND THE DATA FROM THE MASTER, SUCH DIFFERENCES ARE TO BE INVESTIGATED BY THE FLAG STATE AND RESOLVED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

8. COASTAL STATE REPORTS ON SCIENTIFIC DATA AND CONSERVATION MEASURES. UNDER THE CONVENTION, THE TWO COASTAL STATES, RUSSIA AND THE U.S., ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT REPORTS ON SCIENTIFIC DATA AND ON CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES IN EFFECT IN THEIR ZONES. RUSSIA DESCRIBED MANAGEMENT MEASURES AND TRENDS IN THE STATUS OF STOCKS IN THEIR EEZ AND IN THE WESTERN BERING SEA. THE U.S. REFERRED TO ITS EARLIER REPORT (IN THE S&T COMMITTEE) ON STOCK STATUS, AND REPORTED THAT THE BOGOSLOF ISLAND AREA WOULD REMAIN CLOSED TO COMMERCIAL POLLOCK FISHING FOR ANOTHER YEAR, AND NOTED THAT THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL WOULD CONSIDER AN 11% REDUCTION IN THE ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCH (ABC) FOR POLLOCK IN THE U.S. ZONE.

9. POLLOCK STOCK IDENTIFICATION. JAPAN ASKED SEVERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT POLLOCK STOCK IDENTIFICATION WORK BY THE U.S. AFTER SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS, THE PARTIES AGREED THAT A WORKSHOP ON STOCK IDENTIFICATION METHODS WOULD BE BENEFICIAL. THE U.S. AND JAPAN AGREED TO DEVELOP PLANS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE WORKSHOP AND TO CORRESPOND FURTHER WITH THE OTHER PARTIES. THIS WORKSHOP WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE NEXT ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

10. MATTERS REALATING TO CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF LIVING MARINE RESOURCES OTHER THAN POLLOCK IN THE CONVENTION AREA. JAPAN ALSO NOTED THAT OTHER ANIMALS IN THE BERING SEA ECOSYSTEM MAY IMPACT THE HEALTH OF POLLOCK STOCKS. THE PARTIES AGREED TO CONSIDER THESE ISSUES FURTHER, AND JAPAN OFFERED TO PREPARE A PAPER TO BEGIN THIS DISCUSSION.

11. NEXT MEETING. KOREA OFFERED TO HOST THE NEXT ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN EARLY NOVEMBER, 1999 AT A PLACE TO BE DETERMINED. CHINA MADE A TENTATIVE OFFER TO HOST THE 2000 MEETING, PROBABLY IN SHANGHAI.

12. COMMENT: INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES IN JAPAN, CHINA, POLAND, AND KOREA WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS THEIR GOVERNMENTS FOR A SIGNAL THAT FISHING IN THE CENTRAL BERING SEA WILL RESUME. IN RECENT YEARS, SEVERAL INNOVATIVE, BUT UNSUCCESSFUL, ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO APPEASE THOSE INTERESTS. THE USG SHOULD EXPECT THESE EFFORTS, AND BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THEM AT EACH ANNUAL MEETING. THE USG OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, TO OBTAIN SATISFACTORY (IF INCREMENTAL) PROGRESS IN DEFINING THE MANAGEMENT REGIME THAT WILL BE PUT IN PLACE WHEN FISHING IS RESUMED. AT THIS TIME, AS FISH STOCKS ARE REBUILDING, PROGRESS TOWARDS THIS OBJECTIVE WILL BE SLOW. WHEN THE STOCKS HAVE BEEN REBUILT, THE PARTIES WILL DEAL WITH THESE MATTERS WITH GREATER URGENCY. UNTIL THAT TIME, THE USDEL MUST CONTINUE TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A CONSERVATIVE, FUNCTIONAL MANAGEMENT REGIME. END COMMENT.

THIS MESSAGE WAS CLEARED BY DR. RICHARD MARASCO, U.S.  
HEAD OF DELEGATION.  
FOLEY

BT  
#9973